17

THE CHARACTER OF A SOLICITER.

Or the Tricks and Quillets of a Pettyfogger.

With his manifold Knaveries, Cheats, Extortions, and other Villanies.

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THE Character OF A SOLICITER.

A *Soliciter* is a *Pettyfogging Sophister*: one, whom by the ſame Figure that a *North-Country Pedler* is a *Merchant-man*, you may ſtile a *Lawyer*. Liſt him an *Attorney*, and you ſmother *Tom Thumb* in a pudding. The very name of a *Strivener* out-reaches him, and he is ſwallowed up in the praiſe, like Sir *Hudibras* in a great ſaddle, nothing to be ſeen but the *giddy Feathers* in his *Crown*.

Some ſay *he*'s a Gentleman, but *he* becomes the *Epithet* as a Swines ſnout doth a *Carbuncle*; he is juſt ſuch another *Dunghil-Rampant*. The ſilly Country-man (who ſeeing an *Ape* in a Scarlet Coat, bleſt his young *Worſhip*, and gave his *Lordſh p* joy) did not ſlander his Complement with worſe application, than he that

names him a *Law-giver*. The *Cook* that ſerved up a *Rope* in a *Pye*, (to continue the Frolick) might have wrap'd up ſuch a *Pettyfogger* as this in his bill of Fare.

He is a *Will-with-a-Wiſp*, a *Wit* whither thou woo't; *Proteus* has not more ſhapes, than he can perform Offices; he can inſtruct with the *Counſellour*, *Plead* as an *Attorney*, he has all the *tricks* and *quillets* of an *Informer*, nay, and a *Bum* too for a need: in a word, he is a *Jack of all Trades*, and his ſhatter'd brain, like a crackt Looking-glaſs, repreſents a thouſand fancies. He calls himſelf Eſquire of the *Quill*; but to ſee how he tugs at his pen, and belaboureth his half amazed Clyents with a Cudgel of cramp words, it would make a Dog break his Halter.

This jugling *Skip Jack*, having lately been put to his laſt ſhift; has metamorphoſed a Needle into a *Gooſe-Feather*, and the *ſole* of an old *ſhoe*, into a ſheet of *Paper*, for the beſt of his profeſſion have been forlorn *Taylors*, out-caſt *Brokers*, drunken *Coblers*, or the off-ſprings of ſuch like Rabble-rout.

He huggs the *Papers*, as the *Devil* hugg'd the *Witch*; for they are an advancement of his Science, theſe friſk about him like a ſwarm of Bees; yet he is a Man of vaſt practice if he has but half a ſcore of'um. If his lowſie *Clyent* chance to recover an old *Rotten Barn*, or a *Weather-beaten Cottage*, he will be ſure to have two third parts for a *quantum meruit*.

He is Lord Paramount among the ſhifting *Bayliffs*, and a ſworn *brother* to the *Marſhall-men*, and is behind none of them at the extortive faculty, having the confidence to demand, *Item*, for his pains and labour, when all the while he does nothing but *hover* over a *Quart-pot*. He is as offenſive to the *Attorneys*, as *Flies* are to a gal'd *Horſe*, and whereas their *ne plus ultra* is ten groats, Mr. *Soliciter* forſooth, claims double Fees with Authority;

ty; and if the Clyent prove ſo ſaucy to deny it, he will rage like *Tom of bedlam*, but if that will not prevail, he'l caſt a *ſqueezing* look, like that of *Veſpaſian*, as if he were *breeding* over a *Cloſe-ſtool*.

He is a kind of *Cormorant*, that fiſhes for others, but feeds himſelf; the miſery is, he fiſhes without the *Cormorants* property, a *Rope* to ſtrengthen the *Gullet*, and make him diſgorge. I care not much if I untwiſt my *pettyfogging* Gentleman, and give him the Receipt of this grand *Catholicon*.

Take a notorious *Vagabond*, one that for his good behaviour hath paid the *exciſe* of his *Ears*, and ſo fled his Country like a *Runnagado Jew*; next the ſpurious *Reliqus* of a *Mountebank*, train'd up in *Bartholomew-Fair*; add to theſe a mortified *Bankrupt*, and one that has ſcarce learnt his *Abcedary*: Theſe with one that had a ſmall *Knock* in the *Cradle*, and been fed with the *Excrements* of the *Man* in the *Moon*, together with the *by-blow* of ſome fantaſtical *Poetaſter*, who has had ſome in-ſight in a *Scotch* ſieve full of *ballads* and merry *beuks*. Theſe are the ſimples of this weedy compound (a kind of vafrous *Hotch potch*) a *pettyfogging Soliciter*.

In the Society of true and genuine *Lawyers*, he is like an *Owl* among ſo many *Lapwings*, and is no more fit to converſe with them, then a *Hog-herd* is to preach a *Sermon*, or a *Cinder wench* to wait upon a *Conteſs*.

Never did the *Fox* play the Craft with the *Geeſe*, as this *alamode* upſtart gulls the Country bumpkins: ſo that the inſinuated boobies have no more Wit than to prog his guts with *Turkies*, *Geeſe*, *pullets*, *Chines* of *bacon*, *et cætera*, as if he were to be fatted for a *beelzebian* ſacrifice, whilſt their wives and children lead the lives of half ſtarved *pythagoreans*. But this is not all; this

Stygian

Saygian Crocodile with his *Iron Lungs*, and *brazen Face* dares usurp the Office of Attorney-ship (as I hinted before) and no sooner hears of a *puny Lad* that is carved out for a *Clerkship*, but strait he *yelps* and *yawns* till he has him in his *Clutches*, and for a small sum of Money got at the Plough-tail, will undertake to make him a *Barrister*, though he can scarce read his *Pater-Noster*. He is so expert at *coaxing Magick*, that he has a *spell* for every *degree* and *Quality*, he complements *Gentility*, he flatters *Nobility*, and strews a whole sackfull of spungy *Rhetorick* among the vulgar; the one hugs him, the other plays at Noddy, and a third sort admires him, and well they may, since he has not his equal in the whole Goaldom of *Ludgate*.

This very name deciphers his practice, *solus citat*, he alone is able to set a Town by the Ears, and that is a trick of the Devil, but no body doubts him to be of the *cloven-hearted tribe*, whom *Old Nick* has *stigmatized* with his *cripple claw*; nor do we doubt his Commission to play his Pranks at random while he is here on Earth, for as soon as my Lady *Atropos* cryes *Exit*, away he must hie to his snake-hair'd Grandam *Megara*, and needs must he go, since the Devil drives him.

He writes a Bill of cost in such worm eaten characters, that 'tis past the skill of a *Rosie-crucian* to discover the *Apocaliptical* meaning; yet for all that, he will not abate you an ace of the *Summa totalis*, and that to be sure shall be plain enough: wherefore he may very fitly be called the *Inquisition* of the *Purse*, or (in a plainer sence) an *Authentick Gypsie*, that *nips* your *bung* with a canting Engine: and more then that he scorns to cheat you in *bugger-mugger*, but will not fail to do it before your *Face*. He is like the Man that tryed any tooth good Barber; rather then stand out for a Wrangler, if he can pump no chink out of you, he will manage your cause for a break-fast, being a notable Artist at spunging; Oh! he's a terrible slaughter-man at a Thanksgiving Dinner.

He

He outstrives a *Bayliff* in all his cheating faculties, and I know none out-strips him, except his Infernal Grandfather.

In fine, he is the *Yeomans Horsleech*, the Gentlemans *Rubbing-brush*, and the Courtiers *quid pro quo*. He is the *summum bonum* of *Knavery*, in Judgement a meer *Pigmy*, in shew the Beard of a *Demi-blazing-star*: to be brief, he is like a *Lamp* without *Oyl*, a *Trumpet* without a sound, a *smoak* without *Fire*, a *Fiddle* out of *tune*, or a *bell* without a *clapper*; and differs from a *Lawyer* as a *shrimp* doth from a *Lobster*, a *Frog* from an *Elephant*, or a *tom-tit* from an *Eagle*.

But once more to single out my *Quacking cause-splitter*, his Fate (for I know you would fain see an end of him) is either a *whipping Andit*, when he is tongue-tyed by a Learned thong of severe Examinations: or else he meets his *passing-peal* in a clamorous mutiny of *Tyburnian* spectators, or (if he pass muster with these) his assured Destiny being dead, is to be kick'd up and down like a *Foot-ball* to keep the *Devils* in action.

FINIS.